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ABSTRACT

This document argues that the availability of developmental education is essential to the well being of the American economy and social structure. By the year 2050, U.S. citizens will be older and nearly 50% will belong to a minority group. The fastest growing population is Hispanic American, resulting from immigration and higher birth rates. This demographic change has profound implications for education, particularly because poverty has the highest correlation with educational underpreparation, and minorities, particularly immigrants, have disproportionately high poverty rates. Although the majority of underprepared students are white non-Hispanics, the nature of deficiencies differ dramatically. Two-thirds of the seriously academically deficient are minorities. The students who enroll in developmental education courses are not only half the students entering college, they are also half of those who will proceed to fill standard college courses, and half of America's future high skill work force. Students who succeed in completing remediation courses do as well in standard academic classes as those who began without deficiencies. Ten years after beginning developmental courses, 98% of these students are employed and 90% are in above-minimal jobs. This article also argues that developmental education programs are ultimately cost-effective. The community college developmental programs that are most successful have integrated programs involving classes, counseling, learning laboratories, and other support services. (NB)

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Dr. Pat Lake, Editor
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ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING AND LUNCHEON

Tuesday, December 11, 2001
12:00 – 1:30 p.m.
Napoleon Ballroom, Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel

Tickets for the upcoming annual meeting can be purchased for $30 each from any member of the Executive Committee or the Board of Directors or via SAC/COC registration.

Presiding	Dr. G. Edward Hughes President, SACJTC President, Hazard Community College
Welcome	Dr. Hughes
Invocation	Dr. Stafford L. Thompson President, Enterprise State Junior College
Business Session	
Financial Report	Dr. Marshall Smith President, John Tyler Community College
Election of Board Members and Officers	Dr. Hughes
Introduction of Speaker	Dr. J. Terence Kelly Chancellor, Delgado Community College
Keynote Address *America Has No One to Waste*	Dr. Robert McCabe President Emeritus, Miami-Dade Community College
Door Prizes	Dr. Hughes

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2

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WHAT SHOULD WE KNOW ABOUT DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION?

By Robert H. McCabe

No educational program is as misunderstood and less appreciated then community college developmental education. Both legislatures and colleges afford it a low priority. Yet, it is essential to our nation's well being. It is cost-effective, productive and one of the most important services provided by community colleges.

A CHANGING NATION

America is in a period of amazing change. We enjoy unprecedented prosperity and wondrous technology. Yet on the cusp of a new century, with all the opportunities and advancements, our nation still faces daunting challenges. To remain competitive in the global economy, we must reverse the growth of what seems to be a permanent underclass and develop a highly skilled workforce. The task of raising our citizen's competencies falls on the educational system. Community colleges play a particularly important role. They educate the most deficient students, those who would otherwise be lost to our society, and prepare them for employment and personal advancement.

In his inaugural address, President Bush described the grandest of our ideals as the promise "that everyone belongs, that everyone deserves a chance, that no insignificant person was ever born..." That the belief in the value of every human being and the commitment to fully develop the talents of all of our citizens sets us apart from other nations. It is our greatest strength. In the information rich new America of the 21st Century, fulfilling that commitment demands universal access to post-secondary education. It redefines the mission of American education and can only be achieved through reinvention of the K-12 system and effective community college developmental/remedial education.

BUSINESS, INDUSTRY AND WORK

In the global economy, business and industry operates wherever costs are lowest. Manufacturing is already moving from the United States to countries with lower wages. This trend is expected to continue. Sustaining America's future will depend on innovations in the knowledge industries and on developing a more productive workforce. Brainpower and technology can multiply individual productivity to compensate for our higher wages and help America retain economic leadership. The countries that remain competitive in the 21st Century will be those with the highest overall literacy and educational levels and those with a strong "bottom third" of its population, such as Germany and Japan.

The workplace of tomorrow will be quite different from today—the result of both revolutionary and evolutionary changes. Revolutionary changes will occur, because jobs will require markedly different and higher competencies. Existing jobs will continue to evolve, requiring different behaviors and job skills from those that employees now possess. Simple jobs will become "high-performance" jobs that will require workers to

have the ability to reason through complex processes, rather than follow rote instructions or complete the discrete steps of larger processes. These workers will need higher-order information skills as a foundation for lifelong learning.

It is forecast that 80 percent of new jobs will require some post-secondary education. Our educational system is falling far short of matching that requirement. Throughout the country, businesses report that their workforce is under skilled and there are shortages of competent job applicants. They have pressured Congress to allow the importation of 300,000 highly skilled foreign workers each year to fill quality jobs for which Americans are not prepared.

CHANGING DEMOGRAPHY

The United States of tomorrow will be older and far more diverse. By the year 2050, the nation will be nearly half minority. The shift will be most dramatic among youth. Before 2020, half of American youth will be minority. The fastest growing population is Hispanic American, resulting from immigration and higher birth rates. They are 11 percent of the population today and will be 25 percent by 2050, increasing from 30 million to 96 million. This growth is remarkable considering that in 1970 Hispanics accounted for only nine million citizens or four percent of the population. For education, these changes are profound. Poverty has the highest correlation with educational underpreparation and minorities, especially immigrants, have disproportionately high poverty rates. Tragically, at a time when schools are struggling to raise learning expectations, a greater number of less prepared young people will begin school. Ethnicity is not the only demographic force at work. The graying of America will be equally important. Today, we are experiencing the impact of the post World War II baby boom as 76 million Americans prepare to retire. Through 2030, the number of Americans in their prime work years is expected to remain constant at 160 million, while the number of individuals over 65 will increase from 33.5 million to 69.3 million. In order to support the growing elderly population, all Americans in their prime work years must be highly skilled and increasingly productive.

LACK OF PROGRESS FOR MINORITIES

Minorities have made some educational progress in recent years, but the achievement gap between minority and majority students is still troubling. To illustrate, Hispanic Americans comprise approximately 14 percent of the 15 to 19 year-old population, but they earn only seven percent of the associate degrees and six percent of the bachelor's degrees. African Americans are approximately 16 percent of the 15 to 19 year old population; yet earn only 10 percent of the associate degrees and nine percent of the bachelor's degrees. White non-Hispanics comprise 70 percent of the 15 to 19 year old population yet earn 83 percent of the associate degrees and 86 percent of the bachelor's degrees. Hispanic Americans and African Americans lose ground at every step of the educational ladder, from high school graduation and college enrollment to earning degrees and certificates. These results are unacceptable. They are contrary to America's fundamental goals and represent a great loss of talent that our nation desperately needs.

K-12 SCHOOL REFORM WILL NOT PROVIDE ALL OF THE ANSWERS

With the recent aggressive efforts in many states, the school reform movement, which began in the 1980s, is finally showing some progress. The current Bush administration/congressional initiatives will provide additional momentum and greater improvements can be expected. However, the task of preparing all young Americans for universal access to post-secondary education is monumental. Even with reform, our secondary school will not be able to do it all. Currently, only 64 percent of youth earn a standard high school diploma (another 18 percent earn an alternate diploma at an average age of 25) and a significant gap exists between current high school graduation standards and the competencies needed to begin college. As they enter adulthood, only 42 percent of young Americans have the competencies necessary to begin college. If there are no improvements in the schools, with the projected demographic changes, there would be a decrease to 33 percent. The schools must get better simply to avoid worse results.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

Developmental education is essential to the well being of America and one of the most important programs that the community colleges offer. The evolving educational pattern is a continuum that includes college entry. Four of five Americans will need some post-secondary education and most will return for upgrading, retraining, or personal growth. The majority will enroll in community colleges. Nearly half of all entering community college students have some basic skills deficiency. Community college enrollment will sky rocket and even more students will lack academic preparation. They will depend on community college developmental education as the lifeline to their future.

UNDERPREPARED STUDENTS AND RESULTS... The majority of under prepared students are white non-Hispanics. Nearly half are 24 years of age or older. The nature of the deficiencies differ dramatically, one-third are deficient in all basic areas, one-third in two of the three basic areas, and one-third in only one area. In addition, there is great variation in the depth of deficiencies. Two-thirds of the seriously academically deficient are minorities

Approximately half of academically deficient students successfully complete remediation. Those who succeed do as well in standard college classes as those who began without deficiencies. One-sixth earn academic associate and bachelors degrees and one-third earn occupational associate degrees and certificates. Successfully remediated students become constructive contributors to society. Ten years after beginning developmental courses, 98 percent are employed and 90 percent are in above minimal level jobs. Nearly two-thirds are in new technical and office careers—the areas of greatest growth. They commit less than one-third the number of felonies than other Americans with similar demographics. Half are continuing their education.

EXCEPTIONAL COST/BENEFIT... Contrary to common belief, developmental education programs are cost-effective. They serve one million students a year and successfully remediate half that number for an expenditure of only one percent of the

national higher education budget and four percent of federal student financial aid. The average academically deficient student enrolls in developmental courses for the equivalent of approximately one-fourth of an academic year. In a higher cost community college with an annual FTE cost of $6,000 and student fees at 25 percent of cost, the public cost per student for remediation would be $1125. Considering the constructive futures of successfully remediated students, the cost/benefit is exceptional

DELIVERY OF SERVICES... Developmental programs are frequently given a low priority by both legislatures and colleges and are typically under funded by both. As productive as these programs are, they should and can be successful with more students. To succeed academically deficient students need more than courses often taught by part-time instructors. They need personal support, which requires more resources than standard college course work. The community colleges that are most successful have integrated programs involving classes, counseling, learning laboratories and other support services. In addition, they reach back to work closely with secondary schools to increase the percentage of entering students who are academically prepared.

Mandatory assessment and mandatory placement are essential. Students must have the appropriate competencies for the classes in which they enroll. Permitting students to enroll in classes for which they are under prepared results in high rates of failure or watering down expectations, at the expense of college standards. For this reason, developmental education is essential to achieving college excellence. These services prepare half of our students for academic success and permits colleges to establishing and maintain high standards. Dramatically stated, the students who will enroll in developmental education courses are not only half of the students entering college, they are half of those who will proceed to fill the standard college courses and half of America's future high skill workforce.

It is natural for academic professionals to be most interested in academically advanced students and to lack interest in the under prepared. For that reason, excellent developmental education programs only exist in colleges where a priority is clearly established by the Trustees and the President.

Our nation's future depends upon everyone recognizing the importance of developmental education and raising it to the priority it needs and deserves. America has no one to waste.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO GAIN SUPPORT FOR DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION AND TO ASSURE PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS?

Successful programs for under prepared students are rooted in the deeply imbedded commitment of all college constituents and data based effective practices.
The following are suggestions to achieve program success.

- • Assure that all faculty and staff understand the role of community college developmental/remedial education, why it is needed, it's cost/benefit and it's contribution to our society

- • Build a culture in your college that values services for under prepared students. Presidential leadership is essential. Quality developmental programs exist only where the president is visibly supportive in both words and deeds.
- Work to develop in your community understanding of the function and importance of developmental programs
- Insure that the board is well informed and knowledgeable about the college developmental education program.
- Recommend that the board adopt a policy statement in support of the developmental education program.
- Advocate for appropriate support and policies to legislators.
- Establish close working relationships with the k-12 school system. Work together on student preparation.
- Provide a budget, within the college's capability, that clearly shows that the developmental program is a college priority.
- Establish a data system that can provide detailed information as a basis for program decisions.
- Make certain that an integrated developmental education program is in place at your college. It must be comprehensive and incorporate all services provided to the under prepared students.
- Employ an adequate base of qualified, full time developmental education staff who are committed to the growth of under prepared students.
- Institute a comprehensive in-service education program for part time faculty and staff. They handle a significant portion of developmental education programs, and are often under-prepared for the task.
- Require mandatory entry assessment and mandatory placement.
- Utilize the substantial knowledge concerning adult learning that has been developed.
- Keep abreast with successful practices and programs in other community colleges.
- Make completion of remediation a major program goal and point of program evaluation.

Biography of Robert H. McCabe

Robert H. McCabe earned the doctorate in community college leadership from the University of Texas in 1963. He has honorary doctorates from the University of Miami, Barry University and Florida International University.

He came to Miami-Dade Community College in 1963, the third year of operation; he retired in 1995 after 10 years as Executive Vice President and the final 16 years as District President. Among honors and recognitions are: John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Fellowship; The Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Prize in Education; The College Board Medal for Distinguished Service to Education; the American Association of Community Colleges National Leadership Award; and the Spirit of Excellence Award for Contributions to South Florida. There have been over 50 awards and membership in more than 70 commissions and boards.

Dr. McCabe is President Emeritus, Miami-Dade Community College and is currently Senior Fellow, the League for Innovation in the Community College. Since retirement from Miami-Dade his publications

include: The Community College: Nexus for Workforce Development; Developmental Education: A Social and Economic Imperative; and Planning the Virtual Campus. No One To Waste the report of the National Study of Community College Remedial Education. He is currently developing a guide for community college developmental education and working nationally for adoption of the recommendations from the national study. Other current activities include serving on the board, the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, and as Chair, The Miami Coalition for a Safe and Drug Free Community.

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